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ABSTRACT

Findings of recent studies on career and family orientation suggest that the variables that might be predictive of life style are related to personality, the influence of significant others, and certain demographic characteristics. Men and women were surveyed to determine if the predictors of life style orientation are the same for males and females, correlates of life style for career and family oriented males and females, and if separate, distinct patterns would emerge for males and females. Married men and women (N=53) with doctoral degrees and who had children completed the Satisfaction Scale, the California Psychological Inventory and a modified life style inventory. The data delineated four distinct profiles for career and family oriented males and females. Analyses of results indicated that the influence of significant others, particularly mothers, was the most meaningful predictor of career and family orientation for both sexes. Number and timing of children were especially important in male orientation, while spouses' attitudes and demographics were important in female orientation. The findings point to the powerful influence of significant others on life style orientations of both male and female professionals. (PAS)

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Predictors of Life Style Orientation for Professional Men and Women[1]

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Abstract

Powerful predictors of life style for 53 Career and Family oriented professionals were related to influences of significant others, particularly mothers. Number and timing of children were also important predictors for male orientation while spouse's attitudes and demographics were important for female orientation. Four distinct profiles were delineated.

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Predictors of Life Style Orientation for Professional Men and Women

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Purpose

There has been a growing interest in defining variations in life style orientation and in delineating the relationships among life style and other variables. Bailyn (1970) has identified men's life styles as career or family oriented depending upon major source of satisfaction. Based upon career/home commitment, O'Connell (1980) has delineated the correlates of life style for traditional, neotraditional, and nontraditional women. The findings of these studies on career and family orientation suggest that the variables that might be predictive of life style are related to personality, the influence of significant others, and certain demographic characteristics.

The purposes of the present study are: (a) to determine if the same variables predict life style orientation for males and females; (b) to determine the correlates of life style for career and family oriented males and females; and (c) to determine if separate and distinct patterns emerge for career and family oriented males and females.

Subjects

Subjects were 53 men and women with doctoral degrees between the ages of 32 and 63 years (mean age = 45.2). All subjects were employed in academe, were married and had children. Various age groups and religious preference were similarly represented in each orientation.

Procedure

Subjects anonymously completed in random order (a) the Satisfaction Scale

(Bailyn, 1970) which measured rank order (1 = most; 9 = least) of nine sources of satisfaction including career or occupation and family relationships; (b) the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) (Gough, 1956); and (c) a modified version of the Life Style Inventory (Ginzberg, 1966; O'Connell, 1980) which measured role concept, attitudes, the influence of significant others, and personal and professional demographics.

Subjects' responses to the Satisfaction Scale were used to categorize them as career or family oriented. Career Males (N = 7) and Females (N = 13) ranked career as their primary source of satisfaction; Family Males (N = 15) and Females (N = 18) ranked family as their primary source of satisfaction. Scorer agreement between the author and another rater on the open-ended items of the Life Style Inventory was very high as was rescore reliability.

Results

Table 1 shows the nine variables which predict life style orientation for males (multiple correlation squared = .947, $F(9, 12) = 23.69$, $p < .001$). These data indicate the strong influence of significant others on orientation. Although the majority of Career and Family Males had mothers who were employed, Career Males (71%) were slightly more likely than Family Males (60%) to have had employed mothers. Career Males (59%) also reported that their mothers perceived male/female roles in less traditional terms than did Family Males (46%). The fathers (71%) of Career Males were more likely to have been better educated (at least a college degree) than the fathers (27%) of Family Males.

In addition to significant others, demographic characteristics influenced orientation. Career Males were more likely to have received their first

important promotion at a younger age (28.14 years) than Family Males (31.39 years) but to have received their doctorate at an older age (33.00 years and 29.53 years, respectively). In their personal lives, Career Males were more likely to have fewer children than Family Males (2.14 and 3.00, respectively).

Finally, personality characteristics influenced orientation. Family Males were more likely to score higher on sociability (CPI 3) and self-acceptance (CPI 5) than Career Males.

Table 2 indicates the nine predictor variables for orientation for females (multiple correlation squared = .867, $F(9,21) = 15.26$, $p < .001$). Significant others influenced orientation even more strongly for females than for males. Career Females (76%) were more likely than Family Females (67%) to have had mothers who were employed and if mothers were employed, Career Females (80%) were more likely than Family Females (58%) to have had mothers who were employed while the respondents were in early or middle childhood. In addition, Career Families were more likely to perceive their parents as having had attitudes focused towards achievement than were Family Females. At the same time, Career Females perceived their mothers as having less egalitarian concepts of male/female roles than did Family Females.

In contrast, Career Females were more likely than Family Females to report that their husbands perceived little difference in male/female roles. Interestingly, Career Females had husbands whose occupations were somewhat less prestigious and yielded lower incomes in comparison to the occupations and incomes of the husbands of Family Females. Also Career Females were more likely to have husbands who had a Judaic or no religious preference than were Family Females.

Finally, Career Females placed a somewhat lower priority on the importance of religion than Family Females did.

Table 3 presents the means of demographic variables which differentiated between family and career oriented females and males. Females in this sample earned less salary, spent more hours in volunteer and domestic activities and fewer hours in self-employment (e.g., consulting or free lance work) per week than males. Career Males and Family Females received their first important promotion at a younger age than did Career Females and Family Males.

Turning from the data on career variables to the data on personal variables reveals that Career Males and Females in this sample were married at a younger age and for more years than Family Males and Females. Not surprisingly, both Family Males and Females had younger children than Career Males and Females. Yet, all groups had their first child between 28 and 29 years of age (not shown in Table 3) despite the variations in ages when first married and variations in ages of youngest children. Finally, females had better educated spouses in more prestigious occupations than the males did.

Analyses of the personality characteristics (CPI) indicated similar personality patterns for all groups of academicians on all variables except Femininity. Females scored higher on Femininity than males did ($F(3.49) = 47.43$, $p < .001$).

Conclusions

This study indicates that there are very definite relationships among life style orientation, the influence of significant others, demographic characteristics, personality, and attitudes toward religion. The most meaningful of these relationships seems to be the influence of parents, particularly mothers

for predicting orientation for both males and females. Demographics on number and timing of children seem to be particularly important for determining male orientation while spouse's attitudes and demographics seem to be particularly important for predicting female orientation.

The data delineate four distinct profiles for Career and Family Males and Females. Career Males perceived their mothers' attitudes toward male/female roles as less traditional than Family Males did. Career Males had mothers who were employed in professional occupations, and fathers who had at least a college education. Career Males were married and received their first important promotion at a younger age, had fewer and older children, were married longer, spent fewer hours in either domestic or volunteer work and earned a substantially larger salary than the academic cohort in this sample.

In contrast, Family Males perceived their mothers' attitudes toward male/female roles as more traditional than Career Males did. Family Males had mothers who were employed in nonprofessional occupations and fathers who had less than a college education. Family Males were married and received their first important promotion at an older age, had larger families and younger children, were more sociable and more self-accepting, spent more hours in domestic and volunteer work and earned substantially less salary than Career Males.

The profiles for females are both similar to, and different from, those of males. Career Females had parents whose attitudes were focused toward achievement, had mothers who were employed in nonprofessional occupations (64%) while the respondents were in early or middle childhood. They perceived their mothers' attitudes toward male/female role as somewhat less egalitarian than the atti-

tudes perceived by Family Females. Yet, Career Females had husbands with egalitarian attitudes, slightly less prestigious occupations, and lower incomes than the husbands of Family Females. Career Females rated religion as unimportant and had husbands with Judaic or no religious preference.

Family Females had mothers who were employed in professional occupations (50%) during the respondents' late childhood years and who had more egalitarian attitudes toward male/female roles and toward the integration of achievement and affiliation. Yet, Family Females had husbands whose attitudes were less egalitarian, whose occupations were slightly more prestigious and whose incomes were higher than husbands of Career Females. Family Females rated religion as somewhat more important than Career Females and were married to husbands with a Christian religious preference.

This study extends the findings of other researchers on the relationships between mothers' employment and attitudes and career salience in married women and men (Bailyn, 1970; Bielby, 1978; O'Connell, 1980). The data indicate that Family Males and Females gave the highest priority to family and their influences, personalities and demographics seem to strongly echo the emphasis on integrating and balancing achievement and affiliation just as the influences, personalities and demographics of Career Males and Females echo the emphasis on achievement. But perhaps most importantly, the findings of this study clearly define the tremendous impact of the influence of significant others on life style orientation for male and female professionals.

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TABLE 1
Male Life Style Orientation: Relationships between Zero Order Correlations and Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	Zero Order Correlations	Multiple Regression Unique Variance	Analysis T-Value
Mother's Perception M/F Roles	.661	.264	7.71***
First Important Promotion Age	.338	.158	5.97***
Youngest Child	-.324	.070	-4.57***
Number of Children	.293	.079	4.21**
Mother Employed	.271	.013	1.73
Age at Doctorate	-.226	.089	-4.47***
Sociability (CPI 3)	.334	.020	2.13[a]
Father's Education	-.438	.039	-2.98*
Self-Acceptance (CPI 5)	.306	.029	2.42*

a $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

TABLE 2
Female Life Style Orientation: Relationships between Zero Order Correlations and Multiple Regression Analysis

	Correlations	Multiple Regression Unique Variance	Analysis T-Value
Parents' Attitude B	-.450	.092	-3.83***
Mother's Employment	.329	.413	8.09***
Difference in M/F Roles-Spouse	.302	.075	3.45**
Spouse's Income	-.241	.057	-3.01**
Mother Employed	-.309	.076	-3.48**
Mother's Perception M/F Roles	-.197	.073	-3.39**
Spouse's Occupation	-.309	.024	-1.95
Religion - Spouse	-.235	.031	2.21*
Religion's Importance - Self	.385	.027	2.06

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

TABLE 3
Means for Demographic Variables for Career and Family Oriented Males and Females

	Career		Family	
Variables	Males	Females	Males	Females
Current Major Salary	$33,328	$21,700	$24,306	$20,005*
Hours Volunteer Work/Week	1.714	3.750	2.000	5.063*
Hours Domestic Work/Week	6.714	21.167	10.600	32.778***
Hours Self-Employed/Week	16.857	9.250	15.714	10.333[a]
First Important Promotion Age	28.143	34.111	31.385	28.833*
First Marriage Age	22.571	23.455	26.133	24,588[a]
Years Married	24.714	21.923	18.267	16.118*
Age of Youngest Child	15.000	13.923	10.667	9.556*
Spouse's Education (1=Doctorate)	4.143	1.538	3.769	1.529***
Spouse's Occupation (1=Professional)	2.429	1.154	2.533	1.000**

a $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$